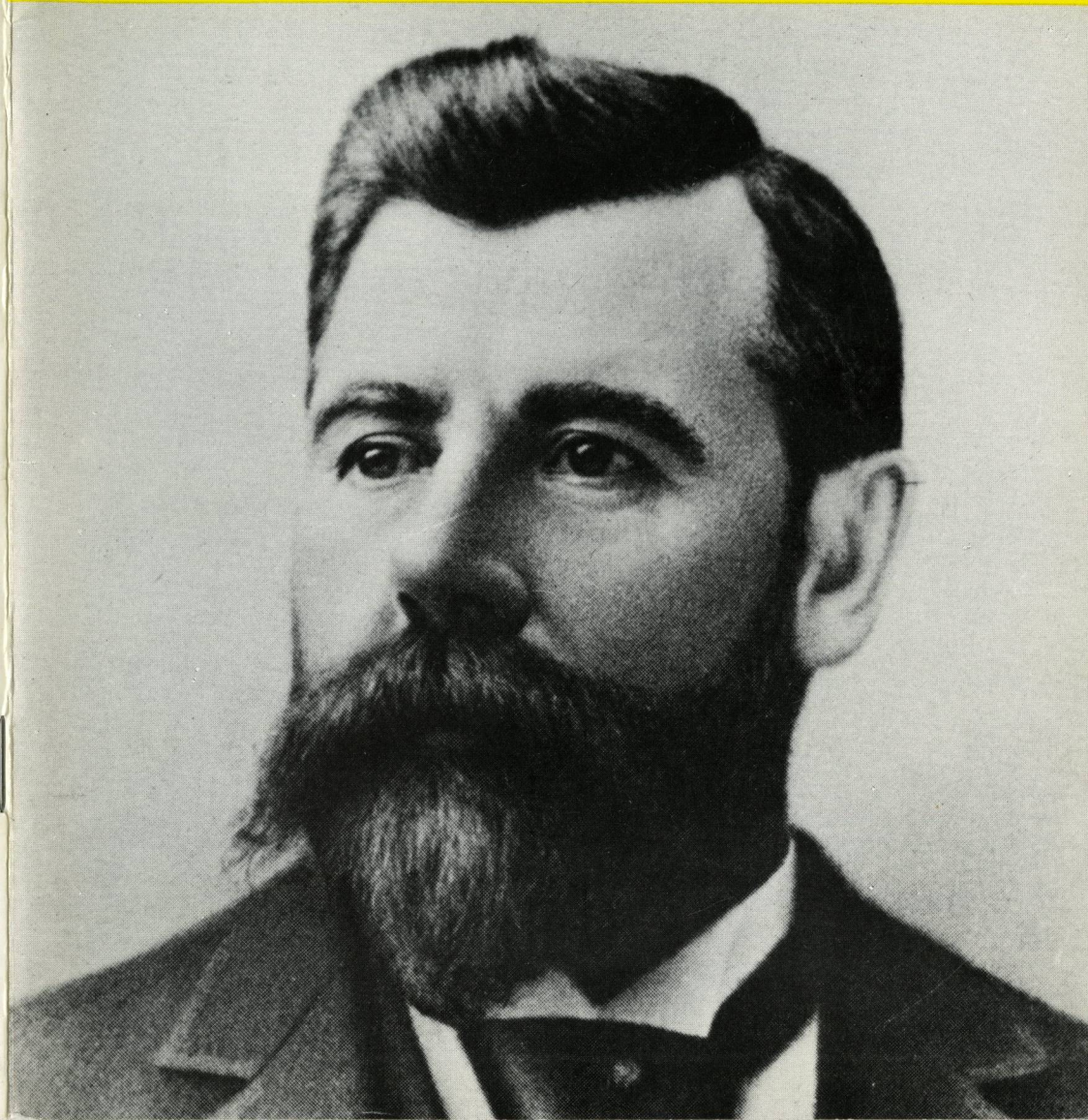
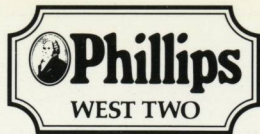


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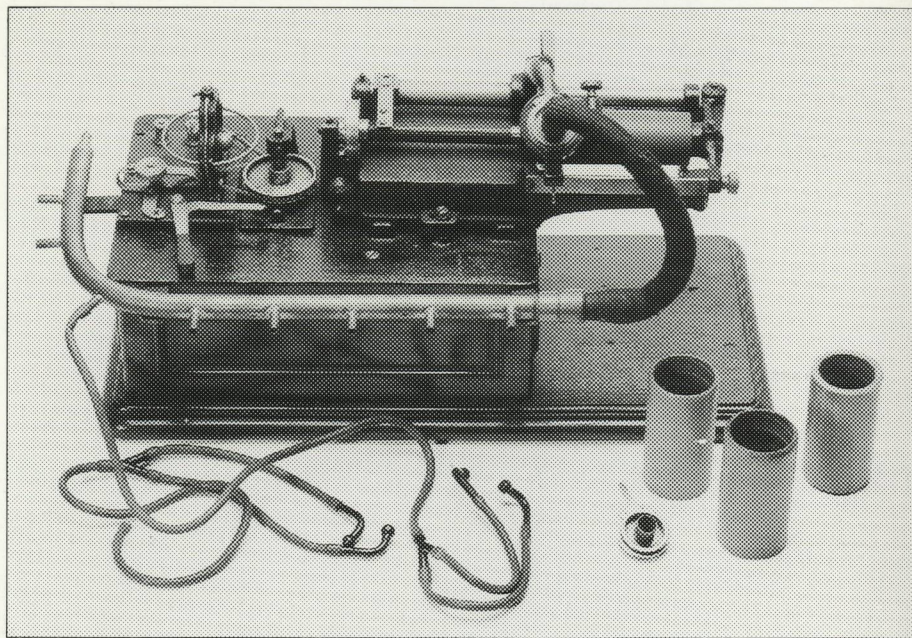
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NEWS





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The HILLANDALE News

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Founded in 1919

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Hertfordshire, SG8 7BB England

Patron *Oliver Berliner*

President *George L. Frow*


Chairman *Peter Martland*

Secretary *Suzanne Lewis* - [REDACTED]

Treasurer *D. M. Field* - [REDACTED]

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Front cover illustration John Kreusi - (see page 131)

Passing Notes

Hopefully those who found much to displease them in the previous two issues will find some things of interest to them in this issue.

To all those who sent their good wishes on the previous number, or towards this one, my thanks – glad you enjoyed it!

Contemporary music, an unusual subject in these pages as a rule, crops up in this issue. I am also delighted to include Peter Betz's article on John Kreusi; in all the praise that is habitually (and deservedly) heaped on Edison's shoulders one is apt to forget the slightly lesser figures who nevertheless contributed considerably to the great inventor's achievements.

A well known figure of Gramophone history is also remembered – Sir Landon Ronald. Bridget Duckenfield, who has written the article in this issue is publishing a full biography of Ronald, scheduled to appear in November. In view of Ronald's enormous contribution to so many varied areas of the Gramophone Company's activities this book should prove highly interesting!

Also included is Part Three of Frank Andrews's history of William Barraud's disc record companies; after the slight problems with Part Two, hopefully the glitch-free Part Three will prove easier – though no less informative – reading.

The record industry is currently undergoing a lengthy period of change, generally for the better – George Frow's comments in his "People, Paper and Things" highlights just one of the many technological innovations of recent years.

The trumpeting of marketing and advertising people however have a slightly familiar ring if, before reading of the latest developments emerging from – in the main – Japanese laboratories, one reads a few chapters of a history of the development of the gramophone over a slightly longer time-scale, such as Read and Welch's excellent "From Tin-Foil to Stereo." Each new complication of a fairly simple process – the encoding of sound waves and the decoding of them, at another time and place, by the consumer in this case – is heralded as the ultimate possible form of sound reproduction, whether the new product in question is Edison's latest version of cylinder, that month's issues from Victor or erasable and re-recordable CDs! All this in spite of the fact that previous generations have thought their equipment incapable of improvement and were regularly proved wrong!

Likewise, is there not some similarity between the current industry's disinclination to market DAT – a 'professional', 'studio' medium – and Edison's disinclination to issue Concert (5") cylinders, also intended for studio use?!

Please note that articles, reviews or correspondence intended for inclusion in *Hillandale News* must reach the Editor not later than **six weeks before the first day of the month of publication.**

Hence the deadline for the February issue will be **15th December.**

Please note that views expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the Editor

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John Kreusi – The Man Who “made this”

By Peter C. Betz

No one has to tell any collector of phonographia who John Kreusi is. We all know him as Thomas Alva Edison's skilled machinist and right hand man, the person immortalised because of the little sketch of the first tin foil phonograph, to which Edison penned the direct and simple instruction, "Kreusi, Make This."

Kreusi made it and he made it well enough that the little machine performed just as Edison theorised it would, amazing the group of Edison Pioneers gathered around, as it recited, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." It might be worth noting that Billy Williams and Ernest Hare, "The Happiness Boys" of the 1920s, sang a slightly altered version of this child's nursery rhyme. their version went :

*"Mary had a little lamb,
The butcher killed it dead.
Now Mary takes the lamb to school,
Between two hunks of bread!"*

John Kreusi was, of course, gone to his reward long before this fractured verse was ever conceived. But, regarding what happened when Edison calmly played his tin foil phonograph for the first time, most variations of the story tell us that John Kreusi immediately exclaimed : "Mein Gott im Himmel!" Quite possibly he did. My father, a second generation German-American, always used that expression whenever something went wrong with our plumbing! It was, no doubt, a common Swiss expression as well as a German one for, we are informed, Mr. Kreusi was Swiss.

Some stories of the invention of the phonograph – especially those in earlier children's books, and even some of the earlier film biographies of Edison – present a false and unfair impression of John Kreusi as a short, stooped, cigar-smoking Germanic character, dressed in his brown leather work apron, working in his little corner of 'the shop' and happily turning out dozens of 'models' for Edison while dreaming of better days in 'the old country.'

Nothing could be further from the truth and, if you have any doubt, observe the photograph which presents him as the well-dressed, confident, distinguished and very Americanised gentleman of prominence which his mechanical skills and his years of service with Edison allowed him to become.

But life had not always been so comfortable. John Kreusi was born on May 15th, 1843 in the Swiss village of Speicher, Canton Appenzell. He was orphaned as an infant and lived in a local asylum until he was old enough to be apprenticed to a locksmith in St. Gall. He went from there to Zurich where he worked as a journeyman machinist. He continued to develop his machinist skills during the period from 1867 to 1870, moving west at regular intervals through Holland, Belgium and France.

Late in 1870, he sailed to the United States and immediately found employment with the Singer Sewing Machine Co. Kreusi showed aptitude with Singer in two areas, not only in simplifying the action of the sewing machine but also by introducing more rapid assembly methods.

Although there is no mention in biographical sources, Kreusi was probably a fairly skilled linguist, having mastered several European languages well enough to work his way westward, and subsequently to have become proficient in English. If this is so, he was most probably also a prolific reader as well, particularly in the areas of science and mechanics. This would account for his discovery of and interest in the already well-known Edison. It is said he sought Edison out in late 1871 and, inspite of monetary inducements to remain with Singer, went to work for Edison in Newark, N. J.

Kreusi comes to our attention for the first time in 1877, specifically because of Edison's request to "Make This," but his official position with Edison for some time before that event had been as foreman of Edison's machine shop, and his major and invaluable significance within the Edison organisation is that he carried out the mechanical execution of most of Edison's ideas and developed the machinery and methods used in manufacturing the early products (such as the dynamos and incandescent lamps), sales of which brought about Edison's original successes as an industrialist. When the inventor established his Edison Machine Works in New York in 1881 to manufacture the primitive 'long-waisted Maryanne' dynamos, John Kreusi became Superintendent. He also made a major contribution to the installation of the electric light system in New York, obtaining ten patents between 1882 and 1887 for the Kreusi Tube, a water-tight, insulated underground cable.

He founded, with Edison, a subsidiary organisation called the Electric Tube Company, serving as Treasurer and as the General Manager, to manufacture the Kreusi Tubing for the Edison electric and lighting system in New York.



This tube was developed in response to Edison's dislike of overhead, exposed wiring (well justified during the chaotic blizzard of 1888), and his belief that the improved safety factor of wires hidden below ground would encourage wider adoption of his system by the general public.

In 1885, the Electric Tube Company was merged with the Edison Machine Works, and Kreusi again became General Manager.

As business continued to expand, plant capacity of the New York works could not keep up. This led Edison to establish a new, more expandable operation in Schenectady in 1886, and from the beginning John Kreusi assumed dual duties of General Manager and Chief Mechanical Engineer. He was to discharge these heavy responsibilities admirably for the next nine years.

In 1895, the Edison Electric Co. was merged with the Thompson-Houston electric Co. to form the General Electric Co., after which Kreusi continued as Chief Engineer only, a position he continued to hold for the remainder of his life. But what had been occurring in Kreusi's personal

life over the course of his first twenty-five years in his adopted homeland of America?

Shortly before leaving the Singer Co. in 1871, Kreusi was married to Emily Zwinger of Allegheny, Pennsylvania. Over the next two decades, the couple produced nine children, eight of which survived infancy. After coming to Schenectady, the family lived at 16 Union Street. The house no longer exists, being the site of the parking area for a social organization, the Mohawk Club. Early in 1897, Mrs. Kreusi died after a lengthy illness. It has been passed down through the family that John Kreusi never became reconciled to her death, grieving unconsolably thereafter. For the first time, he found his duties burdensome and his life joyless.

He continued to fulfill his obligations however, until, returning in February 1899 from a particularly difficult and tiring New Orleans trip, he became ill and died several days later, on February 22, 1899.

None of the Kreusi children are still alive, but both a granddaughter and a great-granddaughter still reside in Schenectady.



John and Emily Kreusi are buried in Vale Cemetery in central Schenectady. Their family plot is easily located if one enters the cemetery from the Brandywine Avenue entrance and turns right – the photos show his headstone and the setting of the Kreusis' graves.

Interestingly, the Kreusi grave is only about 40 steps from that of another scientific pioneer, Charles Proteus Steinmetz. Shortly after Kreusi's death, a street leading to one of the main gates of the General Electric Plant was formally named Kreusi Avenue. Although it is generally referred to by local residents as Lower Broadway Avenue, the City of Schenectady has made an effort recently to have the original name resurrected and city maps use the Kreusi Avenue designation.

Part of the renewed interest in John Kreusi by the city is due to a detailed biography on him written by current Schenectady City and County Historian Larry Hart and appearing in his "Tales of Old Schenectady," available

from Old Dorp Books, [redacted] Scotia, New York, 12302 for \$18.00 plus postage costs. It is a large, heavily-illustrated work which gives one a clear understanding of life in the Schenectady of John Kreusi's time.

Nipper's Uncle

William Barraud and his Disc Records

Part Three

By Frank Andrews

Guardsman and Citizen Records

With the trade mark progressing through to registration, the Invicta Record Co., Ltd. announced in April 1914 that, in future, all its discs would be issued as "Guardsman Records" and bear the registered trade mark. Until all old stocks of Invicta Records were exhausted they were to be sold with a small sticker applied to the record labels converting them into Guardsman records.

"Citizen Records" was also applied for as a trade mark, in January 1914 and, like the Guardsman application that was advertised in February, it met with no opposition and was registered in May 1914. An essential element in the design of the Citizen Record was the depiction of the City of London's coat of arms in the upper portion of the label. In June 1914 Guardsman Records began to be offered as prizes in a competition in which participants were requested to write a review of the Guardsman record which, in their opinion, was the best on each month's supplement.

The recording studio at New Inn Yard was not only recording the latest titles, but had also undertaken to re-record former titles which had been in the Invicta catalogue, the masters of which, being in Germany, were bound to be lost beyond recall once war was declared on August 4th. By now William Barraud himself was the less active director of the Invicta Record Co.'s business, being in a state of semi-retirement at the age of 63. Alfred J. Barton, still only 28 years old, was in full control of the day to day management of the company.

By this time the business of A. W. Gamage & Co., the well-known department store at Holborn Circus, London, E. C., had been having records pressed by The Crystalate Mfg. Co. with its own labels, firstly from the Gramavox Record masters and lately others from Guardsman Records, labelled A. W. Gamage, with green and gold printing.

The war having broken out, 500 titles on Guardsman Record at the low price of 1s.3d. each were advertised in the British Cycle and Cycle Trader, which were probably old stock Invicta Records, with the Guardsman Record label stickers but whose labels would have stated "*Made in Germany*." With a list of patriotic titles issued in October 1914 it was reported that the recent winner of the Guardsman Record competition had been the Bradford & District Phonograph & Gramophone Society, which had just received its prize.

Messrs. Lugton & Co. advertised in November that they were then the sole sales agents for Guardsman Records for London and within a 60 mile radius of the capital. Lugton's were then located at 133/135 Old Street, E. C. The Invicta Record Co. had dealt in gramophones from its founding and by July 1915 its catalogue listed 26 different models; there were then 700 titles in the Guardsman Records catalogue. Guardsman products were reported to be selling on the Canadian market in August 1915, and by January 1916, director A. J. Barton was claiming that the company was exporting three times as much merchandise as they had been doing during the previous year.

Meanwhile in London, John G. Murdoch & Co., Ltd. was having records pressed with its own Excellophone Record labels in purple and gold, from Guardsman Record matrices.

GUARDSMAN RECORDS

LATE

INVICTA RECORD.

Manufactured throughout in England.

Blue and Gold Label.

NOTICE TO THE TRADE AND PUBLIC.

In future all our Records until now issued as "Invicta" Records will bear our Registered Trade Mark, "GUARDSMAN."

Write for up-to-date Catalogues and Prices to your Factors, or

THE INVICTA RECORD CO., LTD.,
1, New Inn Yard, London, E.C.

Although the Citizen Record label had been registered as early as May 1914, it was not until February 1916 that the Invicta Record Co., Ltd. announced it had placed the record on the British market to sell at 1s.6d. each, "with specially chosen titles by artists of repute." One could readily appreciate that some of the artists already had reputations, such as Ian Colquhoun, baritone, Billy Whitlock as a bells soloist and Frederick Godard, a cornettist; but other artists' names were quite unfamiliar as record makers such as Adams & Weston, Richardson & Ellis, Stanley Heath, Clay Thomas, Frederick Blackburn and C. B. Courtney, a piccolo soloist. This first series of Citizen Records was issued in a catalogue series beginning at 3,000 and was given an orange, white and black label with the City of London's coat of arms prominent.

Additional extensions to the Crystalate factories at Golden Green, Tonbridge, reported in June 1916, were to raise the output capacity and were expected to benefit the Invicta Record Co. by providing an extra million discs during the forthcoming season. Guardsman records were advertised in the United States throughout 1916 in the American periodical "The Talking Machine World." Some of the recordings were by the Drum, Fife, Bugle and Pipe Band of the 3rd Battalion of the Scots Guards, who had marched the 7th Division of the British Army to Ypres, doubling later as ambulancemen.

Percy J. Packman, whose National Gramophone Co. (1913), Ltd., with its Marathon records, had recently gone out of business, submitted two of the Invicta Record Co.'s Citizen Records to the July 8th 1916 meeting of the North London Phonograph and Gramophone Society (from which our Society was to emerge three years later). The recordings were played on a Henry Seymour "Superphone" machine – one side was a violin, flute and harp trio's rendition of Offenbach's "Barcarolle," with the other being Ethel Toms' "God keep You Safe." Packman was working at the time – or very soon afterwards – in association with the Orchestrelle Company of Bond Street, London and the American parent firm, using some of his former Marathon masters to assist in the introduction of the vertical cut Vocalion Records in America. Packman's patents had been purchased by the American company.

**The Invicta Record Company –
"We never closed"**

At the outbreak of the war all of the Invicta Co.'s male employees of military age had volunteered their services for the armed forces within the first six months of the conflict. As is well known, the loss of human life was so great on the western Front that conscription was introduced. Alfred Barton had received his calling up papers; he had already appealed on business grounds, but was obliged to forward a second appeal.

He appeared before the National Service Tribunal, whose members included the local mayor, at the Shoreditch, London in July or August 1916. Barton, then 30 years of age, told the tribunal that two of his brothers, aged 34 and 37 were already serving the country overseas. He had started in his line of business seven years ago. If he was drafted into the armed services he would have no one to carry on the business, for great experience and technical knowledge were necessary. He had only one fellow director, aged 65, who was financially interested in the present business but who was without any technical knowledge. Barton told the tribunal he had His Majesty's Government permits to export records and his May and June exports were nearly four times what they had been over the previous sixteen months. Fifty per cent of those exports had gone to America and the rest to places such as Malta, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, West Africa, The Falkland Islands, Zanzibar, Newfoundland and Trinidad.

He then read out some enquiries he had received from United States businesses to demonstrate the potential trading prospects of the Invicta Record Co., Ltd., so long as it held Government permits enabling it to export.

The Marquise Phonograph Co., of New York stated they could sell 6,000 discs per week when the season opened.

The Crescent Music Co., of Philadelphia had written for prices for lots of 1,000 to 5,000.

The National Manufacturing Co., of West Hoboken, enquired about lots of from 200 to 2,000.

The Ecco Talking Machine Co., of Detroit wanted samples urgently, as it felt sure it could do a great deal of business with the Invicta Co.'s discs.

The Disc Record Exchange Co., of Yonkers, New York State, had enquired about exclusive rights.

The Lucky Thirteen Products Co., New York, informed that it was prepared to take anything up to 50,000 discs, or more. Barton added that about 150 enquiries had been received from America during the past eight months, besides large numbers from all over the world. All of this business, he continued, had been in the hands of German companies before the war and if he were called up the company would lose all that prospective business besides losing its own domestic market in Britain.

THE SOUND WAVE.

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GUARDSMAN RECORDS

British Manufacture.

LATE

INVICTA RECORDS.



Our next Supplement will contain full Particulars
of our

GREAT SUMMER COMPETITION.

Prizes for ALL. No Entrance Fee.

Full Particulars from all Dealers, or

THE INVICTA RECORD CO., LTD.,

1, New Inn Yard, London, E.C.

His greatest competitor since the start of the war was the Carl Lindstrom (London) Ltd. company with its factory at Hertford Town which, although German owned, had continued to trade freely until just four months previously, when a receiver had been appointed *for more accurately, a government appointed "comptroller"* – F. A.J. Nothing had changed, said Barton – all the staff had been retained, including the naturalised German who had started the business (a reference to Otto Ruhl) and the company was still pressing Beka, Coliseum, Jumbo, Favorite, Odeon and Scala records; a business which could easily be continued after the war. Barton then said his only remaining employee, Athol Simmons, at first rejected by the army on medical grounds, had volunteered again and had been accepted in the past week to serve on garrison duty abroad.

In a final bid to avoid conscription, Barton is reported to have said: "I have a letter here from the Orchestrelle Company asking us to hurry forward the 100,000 labels for Citizen Records as they would be needed shortly" *[I take this to mean that the Orchestrelle Co. in ordering 100,000 labels wished to have them sent to the Crystalate Mfg. Co. where the records could be pressed from the Invicta Record Company's matrices – F. A.J.]* Barton's appeal was partially successful as he was given an exemption until December 31st, 1916. His employee, Athol Simmons, who was classed as "3B," was not sent abroad but joined the "Voluntary Aid Detachment" as a clerk and was able to continue with his employment at New Inn Yard.

"Phonoto" – "Fonetta" – "Phoneto"

The Orchestrelle Company in October 1916 applied for registration, as trade marks, of the three words "*Phonoto*," "*Fonetta*" and "*Phoneto*" to cover all talking machine industry products, including gramophone records. To date, only "*Phoneto*" is established as having been used for disc records and examples show them to have been pressed from the Invicta Record Co.'s matrices used for its Guardsman records' repertoire. The discs are known to have been sold in Australia through an associate company of the Orchestrelle Company. The trade marks were registered in London in February 1917.

It was reported in February 1917 that the Orchestrelle Co. had set up a recording laboratory in Chiswell St., London, recording British artists for the U. S. market. This was the studio wherein Percy J. Packman was employed in association with "Johnny" Johnson, the man who had recorded Florence Nightingale, and a Mr. Quick, late of Pathe Freres in London.

Some of the output of this studio was to appear on the new vertical cut Vocalion Records in America, but quite where the Orchestrelle Company sold the Citizen Records, for which they had ordered the labels, remains a mystery. The company never advertised them in the British trade periodicals although it had been pushing its line of Aeolian-Vocalion talking machines since 1915. Some Citizen Records were listed in the American periodical "Talking Machine World" for November 1916, but no "proprietor" was mentioned in these adverts. The Citizen Record in its 3,000 catalogue series appears to have ceased being issued in Britain, for the highest number known, 3049, had titles which were current as early as July 1916.

"Coronet" Records

In December 1916, J. Curwen & Sons, Ltd. the music scores publishers of Berners Street, London, advertised a new line – its "*Coronet Records*," which were pressed from the Invicta Record Company's matrices. "Coronet" proved to be an infringement of a Pathe trade mark and when Curwen next issued some further discs they were called "*Neptune Records*."

10" and 12" Guardsman Records, lateral cut, were advertised in America in January 1917 with the 12" becoming available in February. There were to be 94 titles (47 discs) in total.

Mr. Phillip Waldman, who had applied for the Invicta Record trade mark in 1912, which was never registered, was reported to be employed as the general manager for the new Patria records produced by the Patria Record Corporation of New York City, in May 1917. The discs were 10", recorded with a vertical cut groove.

The Invicta Co.'s new Manager

It is evident that Mr. Alfred Barton was unable to extend any further his period of exemption from joining the Armed forces and he was compelled to "do his bit," as the saying went. At about the time Barton joined up, his company became involved in the further usage of its matrices for other concerns. The music publishers, Bosworth & Co., Ltd. began having Bosworth records pressed from Invicta recordings, the labels being printed dark green and gold. Then the Orchestrelle Co., Ltd. in March 1917 applied for the word "*Musola*" to be registered as a trade mark which it was, in due course, and Musola Records were pressed from the Invicta Co.'s matrices which were put on sale in Australia through the Orchestrelle Co.'s associate company there. Bosworth also had their own recordings made by the Invicta Co.

With Barton in the Army, Athol Conway Simmons (reported as "Arthur" on June 20th, 1917) was then described as the manager of the Invicta Record Company, Ltd. with the shareholders at that time as Mrs. Blanche Barraud with 1,320 shares, Alfred J. Barton with 301 shares and William Barraud with only one share. In September 1917 the trade was advised that Lugton & Co., Ltd. were the wholesale factors for the Citizen Records which were manufactured by the Invicta Record Company, a statement which disguised the fact that the Invicta Company's pressings were made under contract with the Crystalate Mfg. Co., Ltd.; so when the Crystalate works suffered a serious fire at the end of 1917, Lugton's found it necessary to announce that they could still supply the Guardsman Records (for which they were still factors) in spite of the fire at the Invicta Record Company's works! William Ditcham, who was also having his Bulldog Records pressed from his own recordings at the Crystalate factory, also mentioned the fire at "his company's works"!

It now befell the lot of the Invicta manager to be conscripted into the Army proper. Thus it was reported in February 1918 that Athol C. Simmons had put in his appeal against conscription at the Shoreditch National Service Tribunal. In his appeal Simmons claimed he joined the Invicta Record company in December 1913, when it had no export trade at all, but he was now manager of the company and was in charge of its considerable trade in exports, still acting as its shipping clerk, which occupation had been taught to him by the company's managing director who was then serving in the Armed forces. The business could hardly continue without him. He claimed the company was carrying out important experiments for restoring hearing to deafened soldiers and sailors. the company was also carrying out important experiments for the General Post Office and, as a result, had made several thousands of Morse Code Instruction Records for despatch to the armies abroad which were in use for training purposes.

The company's other director, Simmons stated, was 66 years old and did not want to, nor was he able to, work his side of the business. Mr. Barraud attended to the financial side only but had been unable to do even that during February, March and April owing to a nervous breakdown. Simmons then told how he had developed the export business, some of which was only just starting. Earlier, he had twice been rejected for military service, classified "B.3" and suitable for clerical duties abroad.

Addenda: Frank Andrews wishes to record his indebtedness to "Barraud - The Story of a Family" (Research Publ. Co., London 1967) by Enid Mary Barraud, for the details of William Barraud's position within the large Barraud family. Corrections: Part Two - column 6, paragraph 2, line 5, for "are" please read "Aware." Last column of text, 5 lines from the end, for "10 3/4ins" please read "10 1/4ins."

All the company's staff was then in the Armed Forces and Simmons said he was left shipping orders on his own to places such as Madrid, Lisbon, Paris, Cape Town, Durban, Lagos, Sekondi on the Gold Coast, Toronto, Winnipeg and so forth. He further stated he had fulfilled all his war-time duties with the Voluntary Aid Detachment. The Tribunal granted him a six month exemption period.

A report about the "Guardsman Factory" in August 1918 stated that following repairs to the buildings to repair the damage caused by the fire, production was almost back to its pre-disaster levels.

Manager Simmons was back before the National Service Tribunal in September, to detail his continuing performance of his V. A. D. duties at the Percy House Auxiliary Hospital in Isleworth, Middlesex, whilst running the Invicta Record Company's business at the same time.

William Barraud, now 67, had undergone two nervous breakdowns, one in 1917 and another in the current year, and was quite unable to take control of the business which was then fulfilling an order for 10,000 records for the French Agency which supplied establishments which catered for the troops in France, with regular orders for the same expected to follow. Also, sample records, suitable for soldiers and sailors deafened by the war, were being experimentally made under the direction of Sir William Barrett and his Committee, which were then being demonstrated. Recordings had also been taken for the National War Aims Committee for its propaganda programme on which a report was awaited. Simmons was granted a further four months exemption from National Service. At some time during the war, the Guardsman Records, which had always been printed in gold on various coloured papers, had the 10" size increased from 1s.6d. each to 1s.8d. each. In October 1918 the price was increased again to 2s.3d. each and during 1918 a change was made in the basic design of the label. Dispensed with were the two gold lines which surrounded and underlined the name style at the top of the label. Another change was that "*Manufactured Throughout In England*" which had been printed around the bottom of the label was supplanted with "*Made in England*", placed to the right of the spindle hole. "*Reg'd. Trade Mark No. 355 565*" was removed from below the hole and divided into two sections and placed on either side of conductor Charles Hassell's head in the upper part of the label. A square was printed to the left for the acceptance of a royalty stamp if required.

Sir Landon Ronald and the Gramophone

By Bridget Duckenfield

Sir Landon Ronald's long association with the Gramophone Company has ensured that his name is familiar to most record collectors. He made recordings as solo pianist (amongst the very earliest issues in the London piano series, 5500 onwards, on seven-inch Berliners), as accompanist to a string of famous names and, from a surprisingly early date, as the Gramophone Company's 'house' conductor in a wide range of orchestral repertoire, much of it being recorded for the first time. He was born in 1873, the son of the popular composer Henry Russell – which was in fact his real surname, and died in 1938.

Landon Ronald's first introduction to the Gramophone company was when he accompanied recording sessions of the popular musical comedy *"Floradora"* which he was conducting at the Lyric Theatre in 1900. As the studios were close to the theatre in Maiden Lane, the cast were recording the songs they were singing each night. At the same session, on 20th October 1900, he also recorded some piano solos and excerpts from *"L'enfant Prodigue"*, the wordless play by Andre Wormser with a difficult piano part which had been Ronald's first professional engagement on leaving the Royal College of Music.

The Gramophone Company proceeded to engage him as Musical Adviser, talent scout and accompanist.

Although only 27 years of age he had already conducted at the Royal Opera House such celebrities as Melba, Ben Davies, Caruso, Joseph O'Mara and many others. The Gramophone Company were interested in recording such famous singers who had so far scorned the 'mechanical contraption' as a toy and considered Ronald an ideal emissary. The first artist he persuaded to make records was his friend Ben Davies, the Welsh tenor, whose records sold out within days.

He then persuaded the temperamental French operatic soprano Emma Calvé to record. He not only accompanied her on the piano, but he also had to accompany her – in a Four-wheeler – from her hotel to the studio.

He had been accompanying the Australian diva, Nellie Melba, since 1893, touring America and the British Isles with her. She consented to record finally in 1904. Here Ronald accompanied her both on the piano and with an orchestra. One song, *"Old Folks at Home"*, she sang with a trio of male singers one of whom was the versatile Australian bass-baritone, Peter Dawson. These two – from rival states in their homeland – had a verbal sparring match completely undetectable in the honeyed sweetness of the recording, but which left Ronald white and shaken, so that he can hardly have done himself justice when he next accompanied her in his own song, *"Away on a Hill."*

Ronald's songs were great favourites with her – she also recorded *"O lovely Night"* and *"Down in the Forest."* They were also popular with other vocal stars of the period; amongst those who recorded songs by Ronald were Clara Butt, John McCormack, Peter Dawson, Joseph Hislop, Caruso and Eva Turner.

Adelina Patti was almost a recluse in her castle, Craig-y-Nos, in Wales, and was nearly 60 when she finally capitulated to Ronald and The Gramophone Company and agreed to record. She insisted however that all the apparatus be taken to her home and that Ronald should accompany her. In accordance with her near-legendary status and like Melba with her exclusive Mauve labels, Patti was given a special Pink label.

New Symphony Orchestra



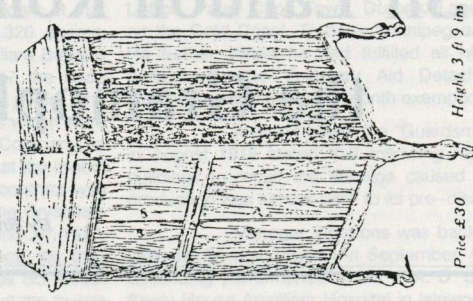
A few
New Symphony Orchestra
RECORDS

- 12-inch 5s. 6d.
- "Die Meistersinger" Dance of the Roses—Part I
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part I
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part II
 - "Die Meistersinger" Presentation of the Mastersingers
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part I
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part II
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part III
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part IV
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part V
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part VI
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part VII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part VIII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part IX
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part X
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XI
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XIII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XIV
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XV
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XVI
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XVII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XVIII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XIX
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XX
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXI
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXIII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXIV
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXV
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXVI
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXVII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXVIII
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXIX
 - "Die Meistersinger" Overture—Part XXX



Conducted by
LANDON RONALD

Model No. X11a
in highly polished mahogany
with
brass
ill fittings.
Price £30
Also made in oak at same price



Price £30
Height, 3 ft 9 ins

The world's most critical musicians are delighted—the musical profession, the whole of the music-loving public of Great Britain are entranced, with the wonderfully faithful 'His Master's Voice' reproductions of the playing of Mr. Landon Ronald's famous orchestra. These records are indeed living duplicates of the marvellous renditions we all flock to the Albert Hall so often to hear.

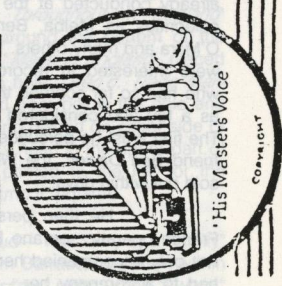
Try and imagine this famous orchestra in your own home, and conducted by its equally famous leader—think of the hour upon hour of amusement—intellectual amusement, it would afford you!—the New Symphony Orchestra itself to amuse you in your leisure moments!

The cream of the world's musical talent—both vocal and instrumental—is at the command of every owner of

'His Master's Voice' GRAMOPHONE and RECORDS

Singers such as Melba, Caruso, Chaliapine, Tetrazzini, Kirkby Lunn, Alma Gluck, Clara Butt; instrumentalists such as Paderewski, Kubelik, Kreisler, Backhaus, Elman, make 'His Master's Voice' Records exclusively. Be sure and hear some of these truly wonderful records on Monday—every accredited Dealer in 'His Master's Voice' records is always delighted to demonstrate the marvellous perfection in which they have attained. Every lover of good music should own 'His Master's Voice' Gramophone and Records—they are superb.

Four splendid Records of the New Symphony Orchestra, including the Overture by the New Symphony Orchestra, are among the most wonderful records ever issued. Hear them on Monday—you'll be astonished. The Gramophone Company Limited 21 City Road London E.C.



Also like Melba, Patti's records had an enormous impact on the public, which was in no small part due to a very imaginative advertising campaign on the part of the Gramophone Company. The Gramophone Company's commitment to recording great artists, in some cases well past their prime, in order to preserve their art for posterity, not only helped ensure that they would indeed be remembered and listened to years after their death but also did much for the image and prestige of the company. Ronald was clearly one of the prime movers in this area – and undoubtedly a most persuasive 'agent.' Along with Fred Gaisberg he might perhaps be seen as a sort of prototype of the modern record producer.

In 1909 Ronald had his own orchestra, the New Symphony Orchestra, later the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra (between 1915 – 1927; in 1927 it reverted to the N. S. O.). He was then given a contract and regularly made orchestral recordings of suitably condensed music. They were the first orchestra to bring out a recording of a concerto, albeit heavily cut – the Grieg Piano Concerto, with Wilhelm Backhaus as soloist.

Ronald became a director of the Company in 1930, a year before it became EMI. Amongst his other achievements was the obtaining of a contract with the D'Oyly Carte Company in 1917 and introducing to the Company Sir Edward Elgar, which resulted eventually in the composer's lifetime contract for recordings with them. Ronald was a constant champion of Elgar's music and was considered one of its finest interpreters, although strangely he made only one record of a piece by Elgar – the Coronation March, in 1935.

Amongst his many celebrated recordings as the conductor of an orchestra accompanying famous soloists were Mozart's Violin Concerto in D, K. 218, with Fritz Kreisler; the Bruch Violin concerto No. 1 with a 15-year-old Yehudi Menuhin; Alfred Cortot's recording of the Schumann Piano Concerto, as well as Moiseiwitsch and Hambourg in concertos by Mendelssohn and Tchaikowsky respectively. In many cases these were amongst the earliest complete recordings of these and similar works. His final recording was with Pablo Casals, playing the Boccherini Cello Concerto and Max Bruch's "*Kol Nidrei*," in November 1936.

Before listing some of the early piano accompaniment recordings mentioned earlier, there follows a review of one of his orchestral recordings from the September 1927 issue of *The Gramophone*, which gives a good idea of the regard in which he was held at the time.

Reprinted from :

The Gramophone, September 1927

Dvorak's New World Symphony No. 5 in E minor is as good an album as H. M. V. have yet issued, and the difference the electric recording makes is really startling. In old days, particularly in the *Andante*, one listened to the horns as one listened uneasily to a singer who seemed to be straining his voice. None of that now. I shouldn't be surprised that after the *Unfinished Symphony* this is the most popular of all symphonies. The effect of suggestion on the public is evident in this case; they have been told that the themes were taken by the composer from negro tunes he heard on his visit to America, and so they were prepared to find tunes in it. The tunes are there right enough, but I wonder if the symphony would have been as popular if it had just been called *Symphony No. 5, in E minor* and if the public had been told that the composer owed a great deal to Beethoven? For it certainly seems to me that the composer owes a great deal more to Beethoven than to negro melodies.

Well, here it is, as jolly a work as one could wish to hear, and conducted by Sir Landon Ronald in just the way it should be conducted. Sir Landon Ronald is the Sir Henry Wood of the Gramophone, and he will never beat the record now. It is Sir Landon's game every time, and as one doesn't like to say of a gramophone conductor that he starts scratch, let us say that Sir Landon gets round in seventy-eight and Sir Henry in eighty.

When I look back at the old H. M. V. catalogues and see the long list of orchestral works, of which the records made by Sir Landon were always the best, it gives me genuine pleasure to find him occupying as prominent a place in the new order as in the old. Our homage to Sir Landon Ronald! He deserves it.

Sir Landon Ronald as accompanist and composer – the early recordings

10" Black label G&Ts, with B. Davies :

{Recorded 1901}

- 2-2500 – "Serenade" (Schubert)
- 2-2501 – "I'll sing thee songs of Arabee" (Clay)
- 2-2502 – "My Pretty Jane" (Bishop)
- 2-2503 – "When other lips" (Balfe)
- 2-2504 – "Tom Bowling" (Dibdin)

12" Mauve labels "Melba"s, with Melba

{Recorded March 1904}

- 03015 – "Mattinata" (Tosti)
- 03016 – "Nymphes et Sylvain" (Bemberg)
- 03017 – "Ah fors e lui" (Verdi)
- 03018 – "Comin' thro' the Rye" (*Unpublished*)
- 03019 – "Se Saram Rose" (Arditi)
- 03020 – "Mad scene" from "Lucia" (Donizetti)
- 03021 – "Il Penseroso" (Handel)
- 03022 – "Good-bye" (Tosti)
- 03027 – "Three Green Bonnets" (d'Hardelot)
- 03029 – "Si mes vers avaient" (Hahn)

{Recorded October 1904}

- 03033 – "Ave Maria" (Gounod), with Kubelik
- 03034 – "La Serenata" (Tosti)
- 03035 – 'Waltz song' from "Romeo & Juliet"
- 03036 – "Chant Hindou" (Bemberg)
- 03037 – "Addio" (Puccini)

12" G&Ts, with Adelina Patti

{Recorded December 1905}

- 03051 – "Voi che Sapete" (Mozart)
- 03052 – "Pur Diceste" (Lotti)
- 03053 – "Home Sweet Home" (Bishop)
- 03054 – "The Old Folks at Home" (Foster)
- 03055 – "Batti, Batti" (Mozart)
- 03056 – "Jewel Song" (Gounod)
- 03057 – "Kathleen Mavourneen" (Crouch)
- 03058 – "Le Serenata" (Tosti)
- 03059 – "Robin Adair" (Keppell)
- 03060 – "Si vous n'avez rien" (de Rothschild)
- 03061 – "Comin' thro' the Rye"
- 03062 – "Last Rose of Summer" (MacDowell)
- 03063 – "On Parting" (Tosti)
- 03064 – "Within a mile of Edinboro' Town" (Hook)

< < > >

[Ronald went on to make a great number of recordings accompanying a variety of singers and instrumentalists, as well as many orchestral recordings, including the Dvorak reviewed on the previous page. Bridget Duckenfield's biography of Sir Landon Ronald is scheduled, at the time of writing, to appear in November; a review of this book will appear in *The Hillandale News* shortly. –Ed.]

From Tin-Foil to shellac

A mechanical Hall of fame

by George Glasiris

The series commences with an Edison Model A Fireside. Introduced in 1909 as an alternative machine to the Standard, the fireside was a Combination machine, designed from the outset to play both the standard wax 2 minute cylinders and the wax 4 minute ones. This gave the distinction of being the only Edison machine so designed. It also did away with the traditional latches for securing the lid, replacing them with end clips.

The example shown (courtesy of Phillips fine Art Auctioneers) is equipped with a Diamond B reproducer, with which it also played Blue Amberols as of 1912, and a No. 10 Cygnet horn, making it a very versatile and handsome piece – not to mention a very fine-sounding one! – both then and now. Originally it would have had a Combination K and 8-panel Fireside horn. Encouraged as ever by the Edison Company, this machine's owner probably updated it as cylinder production was updated. The fireside horn was similar to contemporary Gems' 8-panel polygonal horns, other than that it was maroon as opposed to black and was in two parts, with a screw joint near the centre.

The Fireside proved to be a fairly popular model, though never as successful as it deserved. It was compact, efficient, and cheap – £5 5s in 1910, with the horn £4 4s, as compared to £3 for a red Gem with polygonal horn or £7 for a Standard with a black Cygnet horn. It should be noted that all the machines mentioned were also

combination models. But in spite of its undoubted selling points the Fireside was a slow mover. One theory was that the public regarded it as an unproven model as compared with the the old reliable Gems and Standards, and felt after buying a machine with an established track record.

Whatever the case may be, the Fireside is a good machine for today's collector who wants a versatile phonograph with a little extra to it. Prices of Firesides at auction today range from about £300 for the basic machine, through various stages according to condition and

accessories (especially with regard to the accompanying horn) to over £1,000 for a fine example with an oak or mahogany Music Master horn. The quality of reproduction of such a machine however, properly adjusted, makes such an investment very worthwhile!



Reviews

Cassette Review

Zonophone Salon Orchestra 1929–1932:

Kisses in the Dark; Loin du Bal; Romance in E Flat (Rubinstein); Poppies; Ecstasy Waltz (Baynes); Have you forgotten?; Serenata (Braga); Down South (Myddleton); Rose in the Bud; Madame Butterfly Selections; Waltz from "Faust"; Fairy Tiptoe – Intermezzo; Liebestraum (Liszt); Silver Bell (Wenrich); Call of the Angels; There's Something in your eyes, Tango; Serenade – Les Millions des Arlequins (Drigo); Whistling Rufus; Love in a Mist; I Pagliacci (Arr. C. Godfrey) with vocal in two items by Maurice Elwin.

Vintage Hour cassette SP102 from The Vintage Light Music Society, [redacted]
Kent, England, price £4.75 (UK) or £5 (overseas)
surface mail, both post paid.

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Among Regal Zonophone issues for March 1934 were a couple of sides on MR 1215, "King Chanticleer" / "Silver Bell" by the International Novelty Quartet, and for no other reason than that it was a good record of its type it was pushed in almost every monthly supplement well into the war years. I bought it fairly early but could never quite believe only four players were involved and rather wondered if the players had instruments in both hands and used their feet somehow. I am sure I wasn't the only one. Record companies were less scrupulous in those days – remember the evergreen Master Joe Peterson who turned out to be a lass? All is explained in the excellent notes to this reissue by our friend Stuart Upton of the Vintage Light Music Society. "Quartet" in those days often featured ten to twelve players, a sort of inflation in reverse. Despite MR 1215 not featuring on this collection, the quality of the small orchestras here is excellent, and I hope the assured success of this issue will lead to sequels.

It is good to read the fruits of research into the leadership of these small orchestras on this cassette, notably that they were probably made up from Bert Firmin's Band and led by his brother John; this is supported by the revealed identities of some of the players and the vocals on two items by Maurice Elwin, a Firmin Band member. As well as the Zonophone Salon Orchestra there are items by the International Novelty Quartet.

There are some very pleasant items here. Most get played very little these days, if at all and at least they steer away from the 'Meditation' from "Thais" which seems to be the musical barrier that B. B. C. Radio producers won't cross.

These little Zonophone and Regal Zonophone records can easily be found at record bazaars and are worthy of some attention by those who follow careers of dance bands. Most used here come through very well, though perhaps the years have cost one or two some of their treble bloom. This is a cassette I much enjoyed and will come back to again.

## Catalogue Review

### Phillips Norwegian Discography 1953–1963

*Compiled by Tom Valle and Arild Bratteland, 60 pp with illustrations, self-cover, obtainable from Tom Valle, [redacted] OSLO 10, Norway, price £9 inc. p & p.*

Again I can recommend the patience and persistence of Tom Valle and Arild Bratteland in tracking down retired record company employees or their premises, or both in pursuit of original material for their series of discographies, this time for Phillips. We are reminded of Phillips' experience in radio and electrical goods from early days; more recently one need not have looked further east than Eindhoven to find the perfected sound cassette. Obviously the company has always had influence in Scandinavia.

Nearly all the records listed are 78s of popular music from 1952 to 1963, with a handful of EPs and some Fontana 78s and EPs. Here, instead of the names of artists like Doris Day, Frankie Laine and Johnny Ray, so often found on the British domestic Phillips Blue label, the Norwegian series makes but one concession across the Atlantic (Lionel Hampton) and concentrates on the home products, frequently with local compositions and arrangers. For the student and collector of Scandinavian popular and cabaret music, one of the main joys is the fact that source details are given for each piece, so often a drudgery to catalogue compilers. As usual this A4-sized catalogue is well-presented, clearly typed and carrying introductions in Norwegian, English and German. It should be useful to collectors.

Several catalogues in this series have been reviewed earlier, and more are being prepared; the compilers appeal for help from anyone able to loan old Norwegian record catalogues. Details to Oslo please.

*George Frow*



## Edison Disc Artists and Records

1910 – 1929

by R. Wile and R. Dethlefsen

*Complete with Addendum, bound in hard cover (287 pages) \$54.95 or Addendum alone (96 pages) \$18.95 plus 10% overseas surface mail. Included with these books are two Supplements:*

### Preliminary Listing of Edison Disc

#### Records May 1913

*(16 pages) \$4.95 if ordered separately, and*

#### The New Edison Long Playing

#### Phonograph January 1927

*(24 pages) \$5.95 if ordered separately. Obtainable from R. Dethlefsen, [REDACTED]*

*Bakersfield, CA 93306, U. S. A.*

In order to try and explain what appears confusing, *Edison Disc Artists and Records* was noticed on its first appearance several years ago. Last August on page 87 of *Hillandale News* the Addendum was favourably reviewed and this is still to be obtained separately for \$18.95, or integrated with first book (in hardbound form) for \$54.95, both plus overseas post.

The buyer of either book will receive the two supplementary booklets free, both being copies of originals. One is the first Edison Disc listing and the other concerns itself with installing Long Playing Attachments to Edison Disc Phonographs. Reprinted material usually loses something in the photographing but the printing in both supplements is sharp, the illustrations clear and the paper glossy. There is some explanatory material by the authors.

Taken with either of the larger books these are a very acceptable bonus or if bought separately by the Edison Disc adherent will make useful reading, and not too dear by sterling standards.

Strangely, the Edison Disc catalogue while listing over 100 of the first Discs by titles, does not name the artists, but several dozen are listed separately at the front. This was a strange quirk of Edison's, who demanded anonymity over the first issues of Disc records.

*George Frow*

## BBC Records – Classics in Digital Stereo

Gracie Fields – 1928 to 1938

*REB 690 (LP) / ZCF 690 (MC) / BBC CD 690*

Kansas City Jazz – 1926 to 1930

*REB 691 (LP) / ZCF 691 (MC) / BBC CD 691*

August saw two more of Robert Parker's reprocessings for BBC Records, this time of the redoubtable Gracie Fields and a fascinating selection of unusual jazz items from Kansas City in the latter half of the twenties. Of Gracie Fields little need be said. Her inimitable brand of entertainment must surely be one of the best known in the business. This compilation, 1928–1938, features some of her most famous songs – "Sally," "The Biggest Aspidistra in The World," "The Clatter of Clogs" and "Ee By Gum!" To anyone unfamiliar with her work this record forms an acceptable introduction, as a prelude to hearing 'the real thing' on 78s; to anyone familiar with Fields' performances from the original 78s, hoping to retain their atmosphere and charm my advice is to stay with shellac. To anyone in search of recycled background entertainment, free of extraneous noises and ideal for reproduction through the most up-to-date 'hi-fi' this record can be recommended.

The same may be said of another release in the same series – except for the actual musical content, which is rather more off the beaten track and commendably so. Kansas City was located at the junction of the Kansas and Missouri Rivers; it became a passing place for travellers, entertainers and gamblers who settled there for varying times. The disc features some superb hot jazz from Bennie Moten's Kansas City Orchestra, Andy Kirk and his Twelve Clouds of Joy, George E. Lee and His Orchestra and Walter Page's Blue Devils. "Squabblin'" – by the last-named of these ensembles is reputed to be one of the rarest of jazz rarities and, as is not always the case with great rarities it is also one of the most interesting musically.

As for the transfers, as usual Robert Parker has removed an *incredible* amount of surface noise and undesirable horn resonances, but has also added his 'stereo effect' and reverberance in varying degrees, neither of which techniques contribute to the listener's appreciation of the actual performance. They simply make the sound more palatable to the uneducated ear (a not undesirable commercial aim in its own right). The descriptions of these processes in several places on the sleeve (which together with the inner sleeve note provides excellent background) are somewhat misleading and technically inaccurate.



"Extracting high quality stereo sound from early mono 78s," as claimed in the BBC's footnote, is clearly physically impossible; "*stereo-impressions* transcribed direct-to-digital" from 78s, as claimed in Mr. Parker's own note is a much more accurate description – a point about which great accuracy is needed in view of the plethora of remastering processes currently being used.

*Edward Brown*

#### Catalogue Review

##### **Norwegian Telefunken Polydor 6000 and Telefunken Musica 8200–500 series,**

*compiled by Tom Valle and Arild Bratteland; 114 pp with illustrations, self-cover, obtainable from Tom Valle, [redacted] OSLO 10, Norway, price £12 inc. p & p.*

Telefunken absorbed the Ultraphon label in Germany in 1932 and the T-8000 series started in the autumn of 1935, while in Norway Telefunken was represented by Sonora in 1937 and continued in Norway for a further 20 years although with some difficulties due to the war. Norwegian Telefunken also took on the Polydor label from 1937.

This compilation was much helped through the assistance of the long-lived manager of Telefunken, Oslo from 1936, who traced the original recording ledgers and checked over the final typescript. The ground covered is mostly Scandinavian, as might be expected, where there are scores of dance and cabaret items, and moves south to Germany for dance and light music, listing dozens of records by the Berlin Philharmonic and opera saingers of that generation. For followers of continental music on 78s – and record bazaars show them to be alive and looking – this book and its predecessors should answer queries and fill gaps in listings. The research and presentation that has made this listing creates its own reward, nobody has ever got rich on it. Some of the artists noted include : Joseph Schmidt, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Keller, Marcel Witrisch, von Geczy, Hans Bund, Lutter, Kreuder, Teddy Stauffer, Erna Sack, Fenske, Steurs, Reidar Andresen and Peter Anders. this issue carries more illustrations and labels than in previous ones, and one does not have to be Norwegian speaking to get the gist. There are introductions in Norwegian, English and German.

Further books are expected in this series and the compilers are owed out thanks on their endurance and commitment. The fruits of their further efforts are awaited.

*George Frow*

# Forthcoming London Meetings

#### **Wednesday, November 20th**

Len Watts presents a talk on Pathe at the showrooms of Phillips West Two Fine Art Auctioneers, 10 Salem Road, W2 – for details see August issue.

#### **December 18th**

Free-for-all – members are invited to bring their own records; the theme of the evening will be children – records by, for and about them.

#### **January 1st**

Rick Hardy talks about "British Music Hall – The American Influence," with many examples from G&Ts and allied labels onwards.

#### **February 19th**

Norman White, of Nimbus Records will talk about his company's approach to the reissue of historic vocal recordings, with special reference to Nimbus's controversial use of an EMG, modern electrical microphones and a very large hall.

#### **March**

Chris Hamilton pays a visit to speak on "The Gramophone as an historic document."

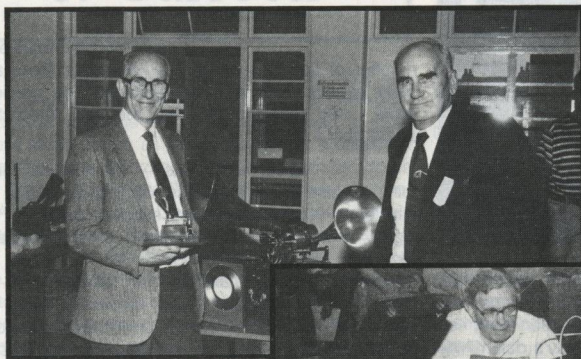
#### **May 5th**

Peter Adamson will speak on "Historic Piano Recordings."



# Northampton Fair & AGM

On Saturday September 8th the second Phonofair and A. G. M. took place at Fairfield's School in Northampton, the regular venue now for this annual Phonofair. It has easy access, wide corridors and no steps, as it's a school for the disabled, so no



lifting of records or machines up and down. This year it was held in September to incorporate the Annual General Meeting of the Society. Attendances were up on the first Phonofair; we were pleased with the numbers attending, both members and quite a few non-members. Visitors ranged from local people to Society members from as far afield as Scotland and Portsmouth, and some overseas visitors included Italians and Americans.

The day started early to the smell of freshly ground coffee wafting through corridors as the stallholders set up. There were over 25 stalls ranging from machines to accessories to 78s – and the CLPGS stall was busy all day selling society items.

Amongst well known faces to be seen bobbing and weaving behind heavily stacked tables of intriguing wares were Geoff Howl with his records; Richard Taylor on his stall of machines – as usual one of the best stocked and maintained in this field; George Frow with a large selection of discs and cylinders; and Ruth Lambert with as usual an incredibly wide variety of needle tins, accessories, display items and related ephemera – including a superb Songster cabinet, seen for the first time at the last Northampton Phonofair, from a Walsall record shop. The competition took place in the other hall and proved very interesting. Refreshments were provided in 'The Phonofood Room,' and were enjoyed by all, being served virtually all day.

The A. G. M. started at 2 pm and was well attended, although some people who had come only for the meeting wished they had come for the Phonofair as well. The day drew to a close at 4 pm – many thanks to all those who helped.

We hope to see you at the next Northampton Phonofair on Saturday April 13th. Stalls are available from Ruth Lambert, 24 Churchway, Weston Favell, Northampton, 0604-405184.



Please send an SAE for details. If you have records or machines to sell, or display – or indeed if you have items not for sale but which could be mounted as a display suitable for the fair, please contact us – we'd be delighted to help.

*Ruth Lambert*



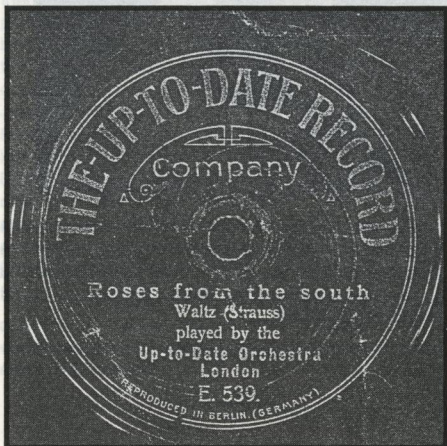
# Letters

Dear Editor,

Here are two photocopies of odd-label 78s which turned up recently.



The 'Kodak' record, Z-609 has a blue, green and white label with yellow trimmings and black print. The two sides are "Evergreen Eve," by Leslie Jones (2767) and "I ain't nobody's darlin'," by Sydney Eyles. It looks like a mid-20s Vocalion pressing, perhaps using masters from Crystalate?



The 'Up-To-Date' record label is dark green, with gold print. The two sides are "Anvil Polka," (E. 526) and "Roses from the South," (E. 539), both by the Up-To-Date Orchestra. This disc looks as if it might possibly be a Homophone product, but no sign of the usual date-codes. The numbering resembles that of the Rubin record, so maybe there is a connection here?

As you see, I have made some wild guesses as to the origin of the records, and would be grateful for any information readers might be able to supply. In particular it would be interesting to know whether the Kodak Record was produced with or without the approval of the camera company.

Yours sincerely,

Don Taylor, Tasmania, Australia.

Dear Editor,

I have recently received a number of back issues of *The Hillandale News* and have eagerly devoured the contents. The previous issue I had received included the very interesting article about CEDAR.

While this process – the removal, digitally, of noise and interference with the signal and the intelligent reconstruction of missing parts of the signal – may be flawed, the effort *is* being made in the right direction. Many of us do not have the opportunity – either financially or in terms of luck – to locate perfect copies of all our favourites. There are also many instances where the *only* known copy of a record *[for the only one available to the record company preparing the reissues! – ed.]* is in less than desirable condition. In these instances CEDAR is obviously of enormous benefit. The non-collecting public, interested purely in the actual content of the discs, may also be more willing to purchase 'Cedarised' discs, thereby helping to disseminate classic recordings more widely.

The articles by both Lloyd Stickells and Rick Hardy basically point fingers and find fault. We should be welcoming the intrusion of "The Computer Age" into our hobby. CEDAR will augment and bring back into circulation much that might otherwise be lost to all but a few dedicated enthusiasts. We should not only be concerned with making archival copies, but also presentation copies, for preservation.

Most collectors would love to be able to hear Caruso as he sang, or as he might have sung, recorded with more modern technology – and surely the absence of pops and clicks is a step in the right direction.



I am very excited by the prospect of making a 'cleaned-up' copy of my own records in the future. I hope CEDAR will be affordable to individuals or groups of enthusiasts. To those who feel that a record is not quite right without pops and ticks – go ahead and put in a new steel needle. Put the heavy reproducer on that wonderful record and grind more and more of the information in the groove off the record. I can do the same any time – but I can also effortlessly enjoy music from the turn of the century any time and anywhere I please.

Yours sincerely,

David Hanser, Florida, USA

## J. Carreck

John Carreck, who died on October 4th, was a long-serving member of the Society contributing to this magazine from its earliest issues, in more recent times acting as our archivist. He brought an interest in early recording to the Society in its 'Horse and Groom' days in the fifties, breaking the pattern of all-Amberol evenings by playing 5" cylinders on his Edison pre-New Style Concert Phonograph and it was largely through this emphasis on the historical side of our hobby that many of the younger members started to look at the history of the invention, as well as enjoying the period music it furnished. Later, when he moved to Sussex and we saw him less often he nobly offered to house the thin relics of the Society's earlier days; here Marjorie and he also generously entertained members on occasions. John kept up his interest in the Society, in touch when the occasion arose, answering letters at ample length and scholarship. A geologist by training, John was on the staff of Queen Mary college in East London and on retirement moved to the country where there was room to put his collection of machines on display. A fortunate buyer in the fifties, John found some fine machines and at the same time managed to meet survivors of the industry or their relatives, and many of the machines had an anecdote attached from such sources. His lifetime's fascination for geology and fossils was never far from the surface, and holidays were often spent with the family round the Isle of Purbeck: some of his 'finds' were to be seen around the house.

To Marjorie, Eleanor and Norman, who used sometimes to attend meetings, we extend our sympathy. All of us who knew John found him a loyal friend and dedicated Edison-ite, without whom the Society is the poorer.

# Meetings reports

## London Meetings – July and August

In July, Geoff Edwards presented a program entitled "Home and Away," which took us on a grand tour of the world.

Among the pieces heard (all from LP recordings) were "Tyrolean Landlords" (Gerard Hoffnung), one or two German and Swiss polkas, a Dutch street organ, "La Danza" (Rossini) sung by Pavarotti, "New York, New York" sung by Sinatra, "Mexican Hat Dance," "The Irish Navy" and so on. The world was fully covered in other items from Mexico, the USA, Norway, West Indies, Spain etc and was suitably rounded off with "Give me England" sung by the Wurzels.

Frank Andrews' August recital was held at Neasden, as we have come to expect now, and consisted of a talk on records sold by chain-stores, illustrated by numerous examples, and slides of the labels.

We learnt that the Ludgate record was marketed by a firm which became Dolland & Aitchison, the opticians. The Co-op movement was covered with their Jaycee, Unison and Unitas records. Catesby's (Valkyrie record), Whiteley's and Gamage's followed.

Curry's were dealt with at some length having covered the period of Winner records (overstuck with a Curry label) to electrically recorded discs (Piccadilly overstuck with a Curry label). Also J. G. Graves with his Ariel records from various sources was covered at length.

Other firms covered included Marks and Spencer, Selfridges, Peacock's, Metropolitan Chain Stores and, of course, Woolworth's ranging from their Little Marvel through The Victory and Eclipse, to the Crown.

No doubt Frank's talk will eventually appear in full in Hillandale News.

Len Watts



# People, Paper and Things

Two prominent cinema organists, both pioneers in their own fields, died within a few days in July. Florence de Jong, who was 93, was the first woman cinema organist. She began her musical career with her father Constantine Baga in his picture house orchestra at the Angel, Islington, moving to assistant organist at the Marble Arch Pavillion. She married Harry de Jong who was orchestra leader there, and was soon appointed to the New Gallery Cinema in Regent Street, to the 2-manual Wurlitzer (one of the first such organs in this country and still in place) remaining there for 14 years. The recordings made on the Regent Street New Gallery Cinema organ by Reginald Foort, especially the Ketelby items on HMV C 1285 (Victor 35821) and C 1330 enjoyed much success and remained in the catalogue for more than 20 years. Florence de Jong made a number of 78 recordings and these are generally found on record companies' secondary labels, suggesting that when there were a great number of established men organists at the consoles they were probably given preferential treatment. More recently she made a number of LPs and late in life was appointed musical director to the National Film Theatre where she and her sister Ena Baga frequently accompanied silent films *[and where your editor remembers being taken by his father – in comparatively recent years – to hear her putting many a younger performer to shame – ed.]*

The second organist was Sidney Torch, so long away from the console that many under 50 only think of him as an orchestral conductor, composer and arranger and the man who started "Friday Night is Music Night" on the radio all those years ago. He was 82 and older readers will recall his series of 'hot' records on 1930s cinema organs. Trained as deputy to the foremost organist of his time, Quentin Maclean, Torch was unsurpassed at crisp, exciting accounts of "Flying Scotsman" and similar fare. He recorded on Columbia and made several LP compilations. In 1938 he opened Britain's largest cinema – the Gaumont State, now regrettably put to other uses but with the Torch Wurlitzer still in place.

It is the Book of Common Prayer which made reference to "those of riper years," and only those in such circumstances will now recall the days of our pioneer airmen and airwomen whose brave exploits led to the joining together of all those red patches on the map with blue threads as the flying boat and land plane network spread.

These fliers received adulation through songs of the day – all those Lindy records, 'Amy' on B 5836 and 'Bravo Jim!' (Mollison) on F 3108 both with Jack Hyton are obvious candidates, but several of them made accounts on records of their exploits, such as Amy Johnson, Alan Cobham and Kingsford Smith and others.

One who took a Dictaphone with her to comment on events as they happened was The Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce, who died in May at the age of 94 and must be the last survivor of those brave folk. The resulting record was Columbia DX 238 and this is surely unique in being the only disc devoted entirely to office machine cylinders.

It seems scarce; from personal experience these speech records were available from 1937 at as great a rate as I could afford – at 7d. and 1s. a time – in London bankrupt stock shops, but this one was evasive and possibly few were pressed.

It was called "How I Flew Around The World September to February 1931" and was sold with a descriptive leaflet and route map, and in his review of June 1931 in *The Gramophone*, Peppering said the record "makes a consecutive and human narrative of thrills not recalled in tranquility but snapped in action."

As for the lady herself, I recall her giving a talk with lantern slides at the local scientific and literary association a few years before the war. I suppose I expected she'd be in a white flying helmet and jodhpurs, but she wasn't – and neither did she bring the Dictaphone or record.



In the last year of coming around to CD – in a modest way I might add – I have been niggled by these little records, most especially I suppose because they meant having to buy some new equipment I didn't particularly want. However the CD gives very good sound with a minimum of background noise and is really the only way today for the young person who takes up 'the gramophone' to come to good music. The LP and presumably the 45 will soon be things of the past, and suddenly one day people won't have the equipment to play them, any more than most can play 78s today.

Why am I irked? Well, because it makes me ineffectual, firstly because it has to be shut in a 'cupboard' in the machine to play, and secondly because I can't repeat unmarked passages – at any rate not with my equipment; the whole track or movement has to be repeated. I suppose it's because the laser, like Gold Flake, can damage one's health, and I feel rather like the motorist with metal bars fitted to the seat backs to protect him from his pet.

The fact that it is a *compact* disc, rather than a *compact* one has been mentioned in these pages before – a *compact* is found in womens' handbags – and that leads to another tedious feature. Just how *compact* is it? The plastic case of a CD measures 14.3 x 12.5 x 1 cm, giving a physical volume of 268.75 cc, whereas the 12" LP in its liner and sleeve measures 31.5 x 31.5 x 0.2 cm, making 198.45 cc, so that the CD is about 85 percent of the LP's volume (no pun intended). Hence it is certainly more consolidated but hardly much more compact when it comes to shelf space. As regards playing time, commercially produced CDs rarely exceed around the 75 minute mark [*with an absolute maximum so far of 79 minutes 40 seconds –Ed.*] compared with something over 60 minutes on a longish LP, but it is extraordinary that after records have been in existence so long the common domestic record cannot yet contain a complete opera or oratorio without having to be changed.

Perhaps this is not wanted by the average family when there are things like tea-making and leg stretching to be done. All the same, to me the CD is an invention of ingenuity that has fallen short of what it might be; what is the next form of this in years to come that we can look forward to and start saving for...?

George Frow

## Re-recorded Caruso...?

In my review of the latest book on Caruso in the October 1990 issue of the *Gramophone* I suggested a re-appraisal of the Caruso electrical re-creations of the 1930s where the original orchestral accompaniments have been overlayed with their electrical equivalents. Not all these re-creations are equally succesful but I believe the best of them come off remarkably well and certainly provide a better showcase for the tenor (as in his "Vesti la giubba" on HMV DB 1802) than do the acoustic originals.

Although the vocal purists may prefer the totally acoustic originals might not these re-recordings encourage a hearing from the more general listener previously put off by the "penny-farthing" accompaniments of the originals. What, though, were the precise musical and technical procedures and difficulties involved in the cutting of these discs other than the obvious process of overlaying? The ever helpful Ruth Edge of EMI Music Archives has kindly been able to confirm that re-orchestration as to pitch of the new electrical accompaniments – certainly as far as the HMV creations are concerned – was undertaken in order to mesh and blot out the acoustic originals.

As a matter of information, the first, Victor re-creations were engineered by Raymond Sooy who had also recorded Caruso acoustically and, in the case of the re-creations, the electrical orchestral accompaniments were conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret, the Victor house conductor. Some of the electrical re-creations done by HMV were supervised by Fred Gaisberg and with the orchestra conducted by Laurence Collingwood. Incidentally, it was Gaisberg's suggestion that an electrical re-creation was made of Tetrzzini on HMV DB 1979 – the only other singer to be so honoured [*at any rate by HMV – ed.*].

A final thought. Just think what could be achieved today with a modern pickup extracting far better sound, assisted by modern synchronisation techniques...

Joe Pengelly



# Leonard Bernstein

October witnessed the comparatively early and unexpected death of Leonard Bernstein at the age of 72. To anyone unfamiliar with Bernstein it may seem strange to speak of one who had actually lived longer than his 'three score years and ten' as dying *early*, short acquaintance however with the incredible range and depth of his genius rapidly lead to a general impression of a human dynamo, destined to outlive his contemporaries through sheer energy, speeding into old age with little or no diminution of his consistently innovative productivity and versatility.

So much for the perhaps predictable posthumous eulogy – but what of the more critical views of "Lennie," as those who delight in imaginary intimacy with the stars persistently called him (indeed, outside of the revolting excesses of contemporary opera 'buffs' I can think of no other classical musician less frequently referred to by his surname). Egoism, vanity and interpretational excesses – in particular involving speeds – were criticisms frequently levelled at Bernstein. In addition, his lectures and writings were seldom uncontroversial. All these criticisms are undoubtedly valid – to some degree at any rate. But the same may be said of a great many of the important musical personalities of history – indeed an innovative creative personality seems almost invariably to go hand in hand with a certain unpredictability of nature, the old 'artistic temperament' – and the persistent flak Bernstein had to endure is no doubt due in part to the absence from the contemporary musical scene of any such significant musical personalities – and the consequent inability of the critics to accept his remarkable eccentricities.

The most remarkable thing about Bernstein was his sheer versatility – and, more importantly, the degree of success he achieved in each of the many areas in which he worked. Surely very few people in the entire history of music, let alone in our century have been so successful as classical *and* jazz pianist, composer and conductor, lecturer, writer and teacher! One of his most remarkable achievements is to have been accepted as a respected performer and composer in the areas of both popular/jazz and of classical music, something few others have tried and almost none successfully.

Bernstein shot to overnight fame in November 1943 when, due to the last minute illness of Bruno Walter, who was to have conducted the New York Philharmonic he stood in as conductor for a performance that was broadcast nationally. The occasion was an enormous success, the first of many. Various mentors helped Bernstein including Walter, Aaron Copland and, perhaps most importantly, Serge Koussevitzky. Due in part to these early influences he rapidly showed a great affinity as composer and performer for contemporary American music, both in classical and peculiarly idiomatic semi-jazz spheres. Koussevitzky, as head of the Tanglewood Music Foundation took his protegee into the fold and, sadly, Bernstein's sudden withdrawal from this year's Tanglewood Festival was the first public sign that all was not well. A persistent chain-smoker for over half a century – informal pictures of him look incomplete without the ubiquitous dangling cigarette – it was sadly inevitable that his tremendously hard-driven lifestyle would eventually catch up with him. Lung cancer was diagnosed earlier this year and a visit to Tokyo a matter of weeks ago had to be abandoned due to his rapidly failing health. A personality as extraordinarily active as Bernstein's clearly cannot simply switch on and off – and from all accounts he lived at the same frenetic pace for around 20 hours a day! It is a typically ironic twist of 'fate' that the very energy and vitality that make a nature such as his so remarkable should themselves be sowing the seeds of its destruction.

Turning to Bernstein's recorded legacy, one is initially overwhelmed by its immensity – on LP and CD, at any rate. On 78s he is comparatively poorly represented. Clearly his recording career took a little longer getting started than one might have expected given the enormous degree of fame he had achieved by the late forties. Of particular note however is a recording for Victor of Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand and, also for Victor, a superb "American in Paris" – his remarkable straddling of the classical/jazz boundary amply displayed.

Leonard Bernstein will be sorely missed by anyone addicted to exciting performances and colourful musical personalities, whatever his musical preferences.

*Charles Levin*

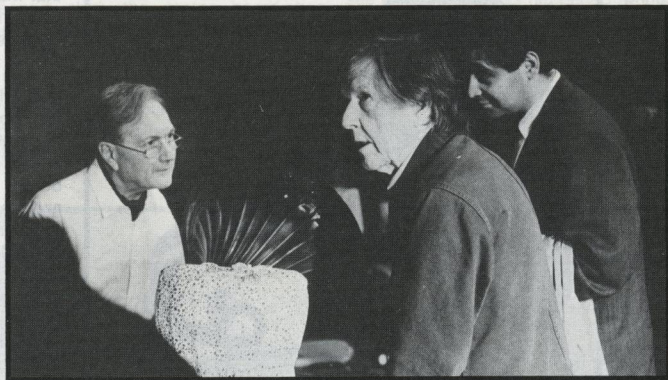


# 4' 33" = 1/2 x 78(12")

## Vintage gramophones steal the show at avant garde music festival

by Robert Hawes

Vintage gramophones played a major role in the latest work of the distinguished composer John Cage - 77 and still an innovator - in this year's Almeida Festival of Contemporary Music which was launched in London in June, then went to Berlin and Strasbourg and continues in Paris in September. The influence of Cage on 20th century music has been enormous and continuing since he first became well known to the musical establishment in the early 1950s for his extraordinary avant-garde thoughts and music.



His latest works - "Europas 3 and 4" - called for no less than a dozen fifties electric gramophones and a wind-up horn machine, operated by seven musicians who played 200 operatic 78s, battling against live performers including four sopranos, a mezzo, a tenor and a bass as well as two grand pianos and a modern stage-sound system delivering recorded traffic noises. Cage provided a chronological computerised time-structure but individual performers controlled their own repertoires, dynamics and expression which resulted in random juxtapositions: a sort of musical circus in which the only relationships were coincidences.

This densely-textured opera impressed and overwhelmed its first-night audience; the second was dominated by the contrasts between early operatic recordings and the live performers, holding everyone spellbound. CLPGS member Robert Hawes (seen in the picture talking to Cage over a 1915 horn

machine) was commissioned to provide and maintain the vintage equipment - a task he often performs for a variety of organisations. "Often," he says, "producers want to cheat, using

dummy machines - vintage equipment is after all less reliable than modern pieces; it's nice when they want the real thing. John [Cage] accepted the hissing, clicking, wowing, rumbling and delightful distortion as part of the general sound pattern. Is it the case that our ears and brains have much more sophisticated filter systems than clever electronic boffins can design? The fact is that while many people have hi-fi, they don't possess hi-fi ears; they twiddle knobs until they get the pleasant sound of a 30s radiogram. I firmly believe that in time people will prefer *listening* to music rather than being assaulted by modern 'sound systems'."



# The Satanic Gramophone :

## a Grafonola Grows a Horn . . . .

By Christopher Proudfoot

There has long been a premium on horn gramophones, even when I started collecting, in the early 1960s, they were difficult to find and out of reach of schoolboy pocket money. Now, any reasonably original machine brings £300-400 at auction, and many of doubtful ancestry bring almost as much.

Some of the latter are perfectly genuine machines which have lost horn or other vital parts, and have been fitted with replacements which may or may not be of similar age, while others were completely new, using motor, soundbox and adapted tone-arm from a 1930s portable or cabinet model.

Workmanship ranges from the quite good to the appalling. One wonders how anyone could be persuaded to part with hard-earned cash for some of the solecisms one sees. The machine shown here is one of the better efforts, and could easily be mistaken for the real thing by the uninitiated.

In another sense, though, it is one of the worst kind, for its construction has involved the destruction of a perfectly genuine hornless gramophone which may be of relatively small commercial

value but is of far greater historical interest today, or at any other time for that matter, than the 'bitser' it has become.

Let's take a look at it. The first point the cognoscenti will notice is that it has a Columbia trade-mark and a gooseneck tone-arm; an impossible combination. The horn, although repainted, is a pattern often used by Columbia (though not exclusive to them), so there would appear to be nothing too wrong there.

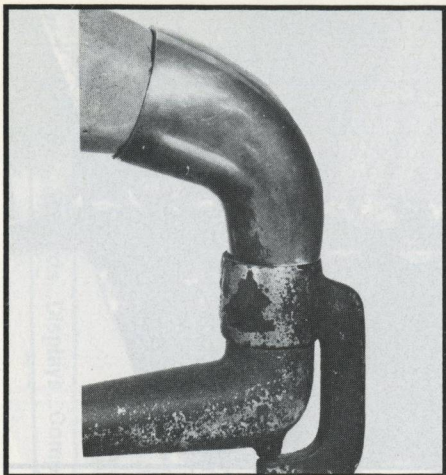
The elbow is a massive brass casting, obviously new - but elbows often get lost, and replacement of this part would not in itself

indicate a fake gramophone. The motor itself is a pukka, pre-1923 bevel-drive Columbia, and clearly belongs to the case.



*"Who knocked this up for you, anyway?"*





*'Bent dumpling'-style cast brass elbow*

Second clue: the motor board has needle cups in it, clearly original. How many horn gramophones (excluding very late models like the HMV 32) have needle cups?

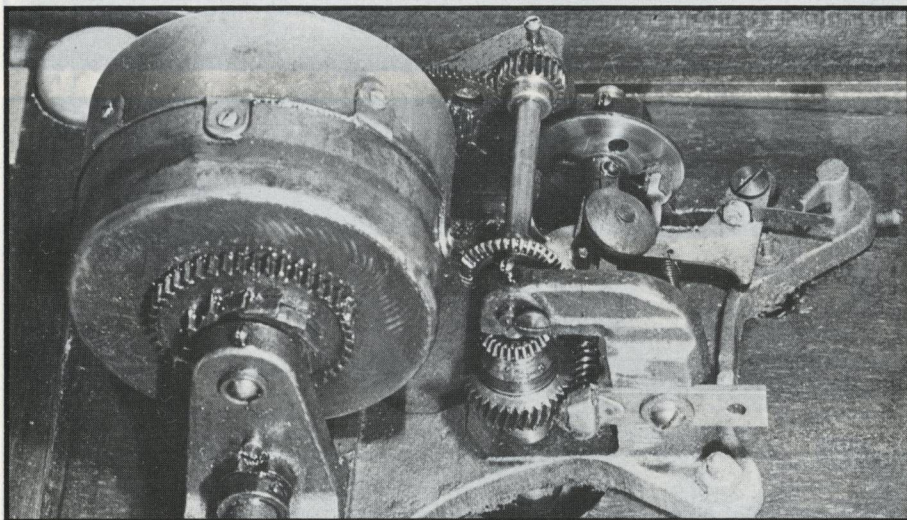
Third clue: The colour of the wood at the front and the back is slightly different from the sides (this actually shows up more in the photograph than in the 'flesh').

Fourth clue: the strips at the corners are fixed by poorly concealed panel pins, and the ends and edges of the wood have a 'hand-made' look, not the straight-line precision of a production run or a skilled cabinet-maker's work.

So let's look inside. Ah – the colour change between front and back and sides is even more evident. In fact, the sides are mahogany, and the front and back are walnut, with a rippled surface left by a machine planer. At the ends of each side, freshly-torn fibres can be seen where the wood has been sawn recently. The front and back of the case, therefore, have been cut off and replaced: because they would have consisted originally of swivelling louvres and a panel with a large square hole in it, respectively. Some adaptors of hornless gramophones simply block these up, but here a thorough effort has been made at disguise. It has also, of course, ensured that the machine can never properly be restored to its original form, a crime against all the best precepts of restoration practice.

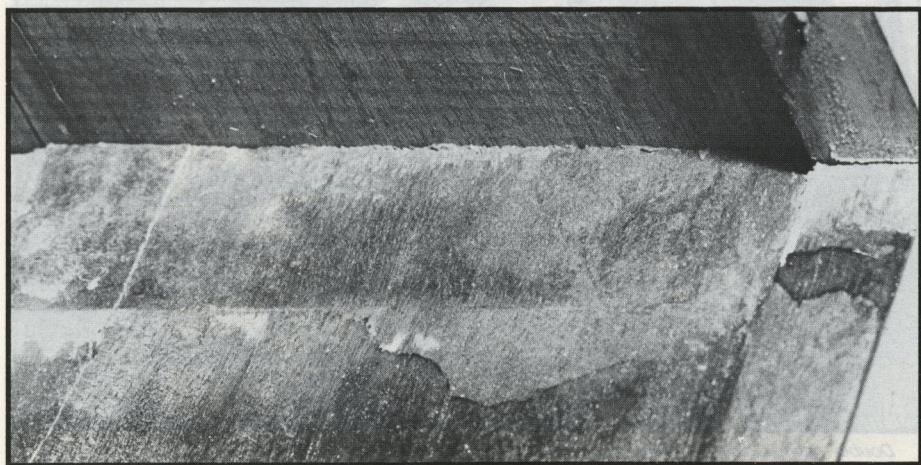
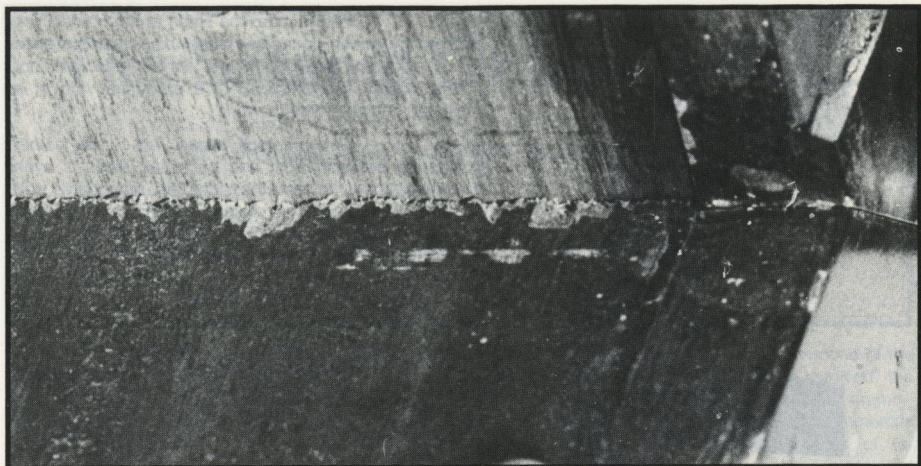
We already have enough evidence to see exactly what has happened in this case, but it is worth noting also, as another typical giveaway, the marks on the inside front ends of each side of the case, where the mouth of the horn would originally have been fixed. All horn gramophones (and even, in my experience, some others now) need to be examined very carefully before purchase.

*Christopher Proudfoot*



*Double-spring Columbia motor, as found on pre-1923 machines; from then on, Columbia motors in this country were mostly made by Garrard*







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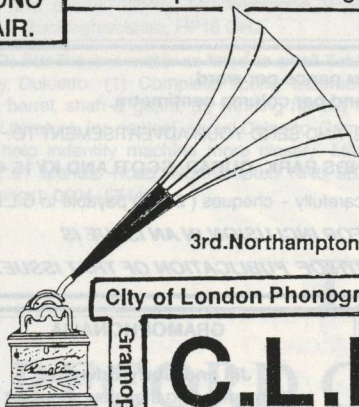
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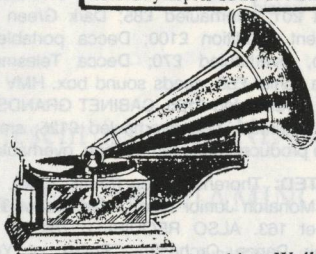
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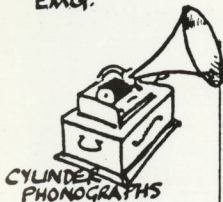
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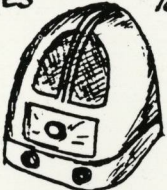
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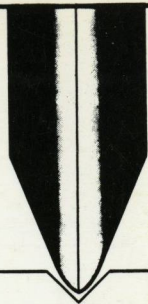
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